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A DEMOCRATIC DUTY.

With the opening of the first session of the Fifty-seventh congress the congressional campaign of 1902 begins. The Philippine question will be the most important matter considered by this congress and in all probability the most important issue in the campaign of 1902. The democrats not only have an opportunity to make a strong appeal to the country on this question, but it is their duty to do so. The republicans do not dare to meet the issue of imperialism openly and honestly; they do not dare to invite judgment upon a colonial policy; they do not dare to candidly avow their purpose to hold the Philippine islands permanently. A large majority of the rank and file of the republican party cherish the belief that their party intends ultimate independence for the Filipinos. The democrats can remove this delusion by compelling the republicans to accept or reject the democratic plan of dealing with the Philippine question.

The democratic platform of 1900 not only presented a plan for the peaceful and permanent settlement of the Philippine question, but it presented the only complete plan that has been offered to the American people. It reads as follows:

WE CONDEMN AND DENOUNCE THE PHILIPPINE POLICY OF THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION. IT HAS INVOLVED THE REPUBLIC IN UNNECESSARY WAR, SACRIFICED THE LIVES OF MANY OF OUR NOBLEST SONS AND PLACED THE UNITED STATES, PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AND APPLAUDED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AS THE CHAMPION OF FREEDOM, IN THE FALSE AND UN-AMERICAN POSITION OF CRUSHING WITH MILITARY FORCE THE EFFORTS OF OUR FORMER ALLIES TO ACHIEVE LIBERTY AND SELF-GOVERNMENT. THE FILIPINOS CANNOT BE CITIZENS WITHOUT ENDANGERING OUR CIVILIZATION; THEY CANNOT BE SUBJECTS WITHOUT IMPERILLING OUR FORM OF GOVERNMENT, AND AS WE ARE NOT WILLING TO SURRENDER OUR CIVILIZATION OR TO CONVERT THE REPUBLIC INTO AN EMPIRE, WE FAVOR AN IMMEDIATE DECLARATION OF THE NATION'S PURPOSE TO GIVE THE FILIPINOS, FIRST, A STABLE FORM OF GOVERNMENT; SECOND, INDEPENDENCE; AND, THIRD, PROTECTION FROM OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE, SUCH AS HAS BEEN GIVEN FOR NEARLY A CENTURY TO THE REPUBLICS OF CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA.

The democrats can afford to take their stand upon this platform and challenge the attack of imperialists. More than a year has elapsed since the election of 1900, which, according to the republican prophecy, was to terminate the war in the Philippines. Every month has shown more clearly the failure of republican arguments and the evils of an imperialistic policy. The democratic platform charges that imperialism "has involved the republic in unnecessary war, sacrificed the lives of many of our noblest sons and placed the United States, previously known and applauded throughout the world as the champion of freedom, in the false and un-American position of

crushing with military force the efforts of our allies to achieve liberty and self-government."

The war is unnecessary because the Filipinos are ready to lay down their arms whenever independence is promised them. The sacrifice of life has continued unabated and the imperialists seem as little concerned about the death of American soldiers as they do about the killing of the natives. The effect of imperialism has manifested itself in the failure of republican leaders to express any sympathy for the Boers, or to feel an interest in their struggles for liberty and self-government. The indictment which the democratic party made against the republican administration was sufficiently sustained by the events that had transpired prior to the convention, and the trend of events since that time has furnished overwhelming evidence in support of that indictment. Let the democratic leaders in the senate and house present this evidence in their speeches so that it may reach the entire country through the Congressional Record.

Why do the republicans hesitate to outline a policy? The reason is suggested in a portion of the platform already quoted: "The Filipinos cannot be citizens without endangering our civilization; they cannot be subjects without imperilling our form of government."

The republicans are not willing to say that they intend to make the Filipinos citizens with a voice in the conducting of our (and their) federal government. This would be to propose a heterogeneous government which would ultimately fall to pieces because of diversity of races and interests. Neither are they willing to declare that the Filipinos are to be kept subjects forever, for this would be plainly inconsistent with our form of government, our traditions and the well-nigh universal sentiment of our people. When one understands that we must put the Filipinos into training for ultimate citizenship or condemn them to perpetual servitude under a colonial system; when one understands that we must either hold before the Filipinos the hope of full participation in our government or doom them to despair,—when one understands this alternative he readily sees why the republicans refuse to divulge their purpose.

The democratic plan for the settlement of the Philippine question is identical with the plan proposed by the republicans for the settlement of the Cuban question, and the republicans cannot reject the democratic plan without showing some essential difference between the rights of the Cubans and the rights of the Filipinos. First, a stable form of government must be established in the place of the one overthrown by us, but it will be easy to establish this stable government when the Filipinos know that it is to be their government. There would be insurrection now in Cuba if we had treated the Cubans as we have treated the Filipinos; there would now be peace in the Philippines if we had treated the Filipinos as we have treated the Cubans. We have not scrupulously observed the promise made to the Cubans, and yet the confidence which the Cubans have felt in ultimate independence has led them to submit even when our demands have seemed unreasonable and unjust.

Independence is the desire and the right

of the Filipinos. If we denied them independence and gave them full citizenship in our government it might possibly be satisfactory to them, although it would be dangerous to us, but the republican leaders do not promise them citizenship in this government as a substitute for an independent government of their own. The Filipinos are not enjoying the guarantees of our constitution; they are enduring a carpet bag government such as the American people would not submit to. We are not giving the Filipinos American liberty, American institutions or an American constitution. We are giving them an arbitrary and despotic government, for a government imposed by force and administered according to foreign ideas is always despotic, no matter how benevolent may be the purpose of those who administer it.

In proposing protection from outside interference the democrats offer to the Philippine republic the same guardianship which has been given to the republics of Central and South America, a guardianship that gives to the smaller republics the protection of our strength without making them the victims of our greed. For seventy-five years the Monroe doctrine has been a bulwark to the independent governments which have sprung up to the south of us. It has not involved us in any considerable expense, but it has been immensely valuable both to the wards and to the guardian. When England recently asserted the right to fix arbitrarily the boundary line between her South American possessions and Venezuela, it only required a firm, but friendly warning from the United States to prevent a conflict and secure equity and justice for Venezuela.

No nation in Europe would wage war against the United States in order to secure the Philippine islands, and it is doubtful if any of the leading nations of Europe would be willing to allow any other European nation to own the Philippine islands.

The republicans said that it would cost us an enormous sum of money to extend the Monroe Doctrine to the Philippine islands. It has already cost us an immense sum to attempt to assert our own authority in those islands. Against the republican prophecy we place republican history; against the ungrounded fear of expense we place the money already expended. When we try to govern the Filipinos against their will and tax them without representation, they fight us, and we have found that they are able to force us to vast expenditures. If, on the other hand, we protect them from outside interference, they fight the nation which attacks them instead of fighting us, and if they can give other nations as much trouble as they have given us they will not require much help from us to maintain their independence.

The democratic position is not only sound, but it is unassailable; it rests upon the Declaration of Independence; it is in harmony with the constitution and the bill of rights. Now that the party can choose the battle ground, let it challenge the republicans to attack the conscience and the moral sentiment of the people as well as the principles of free government. If the democrats will present a united front on this issue—an issue upon which the Kansas City convention was unanimous—there is hope of a victory that will not only reinstate the democratic party, but restore the government to its old foundations and the nation to that high position among the nations to which its ideas and its ideals have entitled it.